

Volunteer Newsletter

Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge



Photo © Louis Ruth Photography

July 2016

Great egret in smartweed

Don't Miss These Volunteer Opportunities *Volunteers especially needed for:*

Visitor Counting Surveyor (*Semi-flexible*)—Count vehicles at Refuge access points to estimate visitation.

Latino Outreach Programs (*TBD, upcoming*)—Help lead kids on fun refuge expeditions.

Monarch Monitors (*Flexible, throughout summer*)—Search for monarch butterflies on the Refuge.

What's New?

Monarch butterflies and caterpillars are being spotted regularly at Deer Flat! Monarch populations across the country have declined greatly over the past decades. *See next page for more info* about monitoring on the Refuge. And if you see a monarch butterfly off the refuge, contact deerflat@fws.gov with any sightings. Pictures and GPS coordinates preferred.

Cheers!

Speaking of butterflies, thanks to our collegiate partners in citizen science for leading ecological research efforts on the Refuge!

Dusty Perkins and Hollie Leavitt from College of Western Idaho are spearheading the monarch monitoring project. Dale Hamilton from Northwest Nazarene University is using Refuge habitats to test whether remote sensing technology can be used to reconstruct vegetation communities after fire.



Monarch caterpillar
Photo courtesy Cathy Sandoval

Around the Water Cooler

We have many new people helping this summer, including summer interns, teens in the vocational rehabilitation program, Idaho Conservation Corps members, as well as many individual volunteers who have recently joined our ranks! Welcome aboard!

Have you helped at the Refuge since October?

Now is the time to submit your volunteer hours for our annual reporting! Please email hours to

deerflat@fws.gov or drop timesheets off at the

Visitor Center before **July 22**.

Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge

The Friends of Deer Flat

is a non-profit

organization that

supports Refuge activities. Friends

memberships start at \$10 and are tax deductible. Email

friendsofdfr@gmail.com for info.



Upcoming Events

Unless otherwise stated, events take place at the Visitor Center.

Reading at the Refuge—July 18, 10a and 2p. Preschoolers are invited to a wildlife-focused story time.

Biodiversity Basics Day

Camp July 25-29, 9a-12:30p Explore the incredible variety of life in the world! Kids going into 4th & 5th grade hike through habitats, create field guides, and find out what it's like to be biologists! **Free! Register by July 11.**



*Monarch Butterfly
Photo Courtesy Lisa Brown*

Desert Detectives Day Camp

August 8-12, 9a-12:30p Come discover how plants, animals, and people survive in the desert of southwest Idaho. Kids going into 2nd & 3rd grade dissect owl pellets, explore a wetland, create field guides, and more! **Free! Camp full but waiting list spots available.**

Volunteer Ice Cream Social

August 20, 12-2p. Join us at the Visitor Center for cool treats and conversation! **Please RSVP by Aug 16th.**

Don't-Miss Volunteer Opportunities!

Think you might not have the skills needed to help? Don't worry! Training is provided.

Visitor Counting Surveyor—2 hours in the morning (between 8a and noon), 6 times/month (4 weekdays and 2 weekends). Drive around the Refuge in a Refuge vehicle to count the total number of vehicles at each Refuge access point and fill brochure boxes. Data are used to estimate total Refuge visitation.

Latino Outreach Programs—TBA, but please let us know your interest in helping! Help our Latino Outreach Fellow, Wylmarie, lead kids on fun refuge expeditions. Activities may include fishing, art, and wildlife-related games.

Monarch Butterfly Monitors—Flexible schedule, through mid-October. Help researchers understand monarch populations. Learn how to monitor a milkweed patch and submit monarch sightings on the Refuge or near where you live.

Other Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

Nampa Farmers Market Outreach—

Saturdays through October, 8:30a-1:30p. Spread the word about the Refuge and get people excited about wildlife. Volunteer to help staff the booth or take the lead.

Vehicle Maintenance—Flexible, monthly

Check refuge vehicles to make sure they are well-maintained. Special auto skills not required.

National Public Lands Day—Sep 24, 9a-

noon. **Deadline to register: Crew leaders, Aug 26th, Crew members, Sep 19th.** Celebrate our public lands by volunteering to improve habitat for wildlife! Projects to include removing noxious weeds and picking up litter. Crew leaders also needed!.

Collecting Owl Pellets—At your convenience

Owl pellets are dissected in our education programs. We always need more! If you have access to owl pellets, please bring them to the Visitor Center. If you know where they can be found, let us know where to collect them.